

WRAP Exams · wrapexams.com

Prelims PYQ, Mains model answers, and copy evaluation. Write to the desk for this paper, a doubt, or the AI waitlist.

ask@wrapexams.com · +91 85951 84903 · wrapexams.com

Q7(b)

Discuss the bio-social determinants of fertility and fecundity

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2021 · Anthropology GS 1 · 15 marks · Biological and socio-ecological factors influencing fecundity, fertility, natality and mortality.

11.3 Biological and socio-ecological factors influencing fecundity, fertility, natality and mortality.

Core demand of the question

- Discuss the bio-social determinants of fertility and fecundity
- Write about 200 words for 15 marks

Revision summary

Fecundity is biological capacity; fertility is realised births.

Age, nutrition, lactation, and some chromosomal syndromes shape fecundity.

Marriage, taboos, class, and contraception shape fertility.

Davis and Blake listed the intermediate variables between society and births.

High-altitude and foraging ecologies add stress to the same loop.

Introduction

Fecundity is the biological capacity to conceive. Fertility is the actual production of live births. Bio-social determinants sit on both words.

Body**Fecundity**

- Age, nutrition, disease, and endocrine health set the window. Menarche and menopause bound female fecundity; sperm quality bounds male.
- Adolescent spurt timing, lactation amenorrhoea, and sexually transmitted infection change capacity.
- Chromosomal conditions such as **Turner** and **Klinefelter** syndromes can abolish or sharply cut fecundity.

Fertility

- Marriage rules, age at union, and widow remarriage, as **Dumont** and Indian demography show, decide how much fecundity is used.
- **Malthus** stressed checks. **Davis and Blake** listed intermediate variables: intercourse, conception, and gestation.
- Breastfeeding, postpartum taboos, and polygyny alter spacing. **Yanomami** and many horticultural groups show long birth intervals with nursing.
- Class, caste, education, and women's work, in **Weber's** status sense as well as **Marx's** labour sense, shape desired family size.

- State policy, contraception, and son preference are social. High-altitude **Tibetan** and hard **Inuit** seasons add ecological stress to births and infant loss.

The loop

- Fertility is never only a uterus. Fecundity is never only a custom. Anthropology measures both.

Flow diagram

Fecundity capacity -> Age nutrition disease

Fertility births -> Marriage labour policy

Fecundity capacity -> Fertility births

Marriage labour policy -> Fertility births

Conclusion

Fecundity is capacity; fertility is births. Age, body, and disease set the first. Marriage, labour, lactation, and policy set the second.

Facts & figures

Davis and Blake

Intermediate fertility variables: exposure, conception, and successful gestation.

Lactational amenorrhoea

Intensive breastfeeding delays ovulation and spaces births in many populations.

Turner / Klinefelter

Sex-chromosome aneuploidies that typically cause infertility or sterility.

Malthus

Framed positive and preventive checks; later demography specified the social paths.